

## Message Text

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R 242131Z JAN 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USLO PEKING

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN, PFOR, CH

SUBJECT: US-PRC CONSULAR AFFAIRS

1. ON JANUARY 22, AT DEPARTMENT INITIATIVE, PRCLO OFFICERS CONCERNED WITH CONSULAR AFFAIRS (CHI LI-TE AND MA PEI-CHIANG) CALLED ON DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF VISA OFFICE AND OTHER DEPT OFFICERS. PURPOSE OF ASKING CHI AND MA TO COME IN WAS TO DISCUSS QUESTION OF VISA FEES (INCLUDING PERIOD OF VALIDITY) AND VISAS FOR LONG-TERM (OVER SIX MONTHS) TRAINEES. OTHER SUBJECTS WHICH AROSE DURING THE CONVERSATION INCLUDED VALIDITY OF PRC "TRAVEL PERMITS", NEED FOR PRC RE-ENTRY VISAS, TIME REQUIRED FOR PROCESSING VISA APPLICATIONS, AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED BY ALIEN PERMANENT RESIDENTS OF THE US IN SEEKING INS PERMISSION TO RETURN TO THE US.

2. WE ASKED CHI WHAT FEES PRC CHARGES FOR US APPLICANTS FOR PRC VISAS. HE RESPONDED THAT THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR

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OFFICIAL VISITORS TO CHINA, INCLUDING TECHNICIANS VISIT-

ING USLO ON REGULAR PASSPORTS, BUT THERE IS A STANDARD CHARGE OF US DOLS SIX WHICH COVERS BOTH VISA FEES AND HANDLING (E.G., TELEGRAPHIC) CHARGES FOR ALL TOURISTS AND COMMERCIAL VISITORS. HE WAS UNABLE TO BREAK FEE DOWN BETWEEN THE TWO ELEMENTS, BUT SAID NO MATTER HOW MANY CABLES ARE SENT BETWEEN PRCLO AND PEKING NO CHARGE BEYOND THE ORIGINAL DOLS SIX IS MADE. (COMMENT: DEPARTMENT IS

NOW IN PROCESS OF DETERMINING WHETHER WE SHOULD CHARGE FEE-RECIPROCITY IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR HERE--AND IF SO, HOW MUCH AND FOR WHICH CATEGORIES. WE TOLD CHI WE WOULD INFORM HIM OF OUR DECISION.)

3. CHI WAS SHOWN A COPY OF PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF VALIDITY PERIODS FOR VISAS ISSUED TO PRC PASSPORT HOLDERS UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES (12 MONTHS MULTIPLE ENTRY FOR PRCLO, SIX MONTHS MULTIPLE ENTRY FOR PRCMUN, 12 MONTHS MULTIPLE ENTRY FOR CREWMEN ,THREE MONTHS SINGLE ENTRY FOR ALL OTHERS). IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT THESE LIMITS DID NOT NECESSARILY RELATE TO DURATION OF STAY THE VISITOR WAS PERMITTED, BUT ONLY THE "WINDOW" HE OR SHE HAD FOR ENTERING THE UNITED STATES. CHI TOOK THIS ALL IN AND SAID HE HAD NO COMMENT TO OFFER ON OUR SCHEDULE. HE LEFT THE IMPRESSION THAT HE THOUGHT THE PROPOSED SCHEDULE WAS ROUGHLY COMPARABLE TO PRC PRACTICE, BUT SAID PRC SYSTEM IS NOT SO HIGHLY FORMALIZED.

4. CHI WAS REMINDED OF EARLIER CONVERSATION WITH HIM ABOUT VISAS FOR LONG-TERM TRAINEES (THOSE STAYING OVER SIX MONTHS). VARIOUS REQUIREMENTS FOR B-1 AND H-3 VISAS WERE DISCUSSED, INCLUDING QUESTION OF INITIAL PETITION REQUIREMENT FOR H-3 BUT RESPONSIBILITY OF B-1 VISA HOLDER FOR FILING FOR (AND PAYING FEE FOR) EXTENSION OF STAY BEYOND SIX MONTHS. HE SAID HE HAD REPORTED THE EARLIER DISCUSSION TO PEKING BUT HAD NO RESPONSE. HE SAID HE WOULD REITERATE OUR REQUEST FOR THEIR VIEWS.

5. THE CASE OF PROFESSOR T. T. LI WAS RAISED WITH CHI, AND THIS LED TO SEVERAL INTERESTING REVELATIONS, ABOUT BOTH LI'S CASE AND PRC PASSPORT PRACTICE IN GENERAL. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AS REGARDS LI, CHI SAID THAT LI HAD BEEN ISSUED A PASSPORT BY PRCLO IN LIEU OF HIS TRAVEL PERMIT, BUT IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION HE SAID THAT WHEREAS THE TRAVEL PERMIT HAD BEEN GOOD FOR RE-ENTRY TO THE PRC THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1974, THE PASSPORT CONTAINED A RE-ENTRY VISA TO CHINA VALID ONLY THROUGH MARCH. CHI SAID THIS HAD BEEN DONE BECAUSE PROFESSOR LI SAID HE ONLY INTENDED TO STAY IN THE US FOR TWO MONTHS.

6. IT WAS EXPLAINED TO CHI THAT UNDER US LAW A VISITOR TO THE UNITED STATES MUST BE ASSURED OF PERMISSION TO RETURN TO HIS COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE VALID FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS BEYOND THE INTENDED DATE OF DEPARTURE FROM THE US. THAT MEANT THAT IN PROFESSOR LI'S CASE, WITH HIS PRESENT VISA, THE PRC RE-ENTRY VISA SHOULD BE VALID THROUGH SEPTEMBER. IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT PROFESSOR LI MAY EXTEND HIS STAY IN THE US FOR SEVERAL MONTHS IN

RESEARCH AND TO TALK WITH CHINA SCHOLARS AROUND THE COUNTRY. IN THAT CASE, IT WAS EMPHASIZED ONCE AGAIN THAT THE NEW REENTRY VISA MUST BE VALID FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS BEYOND PROFESSOR LI'S INTENDED DATE OF DEPARTURE. CHI WAS URGED TO INFORM PEKING OF THIS REQUIREMENT, NOT JUST IN PROFESSOR LI'S CASE, BUT IN GENERAL, SO THAT THEY COULD ISSUE APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION TO PRIVATE PRC TRAVELERS.

7. DURING THIS DISCUSSION IT WAS LEARNED THAT "TRAVEL PERMITS" ARE GENERALLY GIVEN TO PEOPLE TRAVELING TO HONG KONG, BUT THEY ARE GOOD FOR TRAVEL ELSEWHERE AND EACH PERMIT IS VALID FOR RETURN TO CHINA FOR AS LONG AS THE PERMIT ITSELF IS VALID. WITH NON-OFFICIAL PASSPORTS, HOWEVER, A REENTRY VISA IS REQUIRED TO ALLOW THE PERSON TO RETURN TO CHINA. (IN THIS WAY OVERSEAS CHINESE HOLDERS OF PRC PASSPORTS CAN BE KEPT OUT OF CHINA.) THUS, A PASSPORT MAY BE VALID FOR SEVERAL YEARS, BUT THE REENTRY VISA TO CHINA MAY ONLY EXTEND FOR A FEW WEEKS OR MONTHS--OR YEARS IF SO INDICATED.

8. THE DISCUSSION REVEALED THAT PRCLO DID NOT KNOW THAT USLO WAS ISSUING VISAS TO ANY BUT OFFICIAL TRAVEL-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ERS. (THIS WAS THE SEEMING EXPLANATION FOR PROFESSOR LI'S HAVING TRAVELED ON A "TRAVEL PERMIT" RATHER THAN A PASSPORT.) IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT NIV'S ARE ISSUED IN PEKING, BUT NOT IV'S. WHEN ASKED WHETHER TRAVELERS FROM SOUTHERN CHINA WOULD LIKELY OBTAIN PASSPORTS AND APPLY TO USLO FOR VISAS OR WHETHER THEY WOULD LIKELY EXIT CHINA ON "TRAVEL PERMITS" AND APPLY FOR US VISAS IN HONG KONG, CHI RESPONDED THAT THE LATTER WOULD PROBABLY BE THE PATTERN.

9. CHI THEN ASKED HOW LONG IT TOOK TO PROCESS A VISA APPLICATION. HE WAS TOLD THAT FOR OFFICIAL VISITORS IT WAS A MATTER OF ONE OR TWO DAYS--POSSIBLY A FEW MORE IF A WEEKEND INTERVENED. IN THE CASE OF OTHER VISITORS, IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT IN THE PAST THE OBJECTIVE HAD BEEN

TO ISSUE THE VISA AT LEAST TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE TRAVELER LEFT PEKING, BUT THAT WE HAD TAKEN NOTE OF COMMENTS IN PEKING AND WASHINGTON ABOUT SLOW TURNAROUND TIMES, AND WE WOULD NOW DO OUR BEST TO PROCESS THE VISAS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. THIS WOULD STILL REQUIRE A FEW DAYS MORE THAN OFFICIAL TRAVELERS BUT WE HOPED IT WOULD BE TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE CHINESE TRAVELERS.

10. CHI THEN SURPRISINGLY ASKED HOW LONG IT TOOK TO ISSUE IMMIGRANT VISAS. HE WAS TOLD THAT IT WOULD TAKE A

CONSIDERABLY LONGER TIME, WITH THE EXACT TIME REQUIRED DEPENDING ON MANY DIFFERENT FACTORS. WE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO STATE TO CHI THAT WE PRESUMED THE NUMBER OF IMMIGRANT VISA CASES WOULD INCREASE OVER TIME AS MORE AND MORE CHINESE-AMERICANS SOUGHT TO REUNITE FAMILIES BY BRINGING THEIR RELATIVES TO LIVE IN THE US. WE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT AS THAT SITUATION DEVELOPED WE WOULD BE ABLE BOTH IN WASHINGTON AND PEKING TO WORK COOPERATIVELY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE INVOLVED. CHI SMILED AND NODDED IN A NONCOMMITTAL WAY.

11. MA THEN ASKED IF IT WOULD HELP ALIEN PERMANENT RESIDENTS (I.E., OVERSEAS CHINESE HOLDING GREEN CARDS) OBTAIN INS PERMISSION TO REENTER THE UNITED STATES IF THEY HAD SOME SORT OF DOCUMENTATION FROM THE PRC ABOUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEIR INTENDED TRAVEL TO CHINA AND RETURN. WE PROMISED TO LOOK \*NTO THAT MATTER WITH INS AND GET BACK TO HIM.

12. BOTH SIDES ENDED THE MEETING WITH EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS MATTERS DIRECTLY AND OPENLY AND WITH THE HOPE THAT WE WOULD BE IN FREQUENT TOUCH IN THE FUTURE. KISSINGER

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